1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

Locality

New Ireland is divided into nine main linguistic units, which are further subdivided into smaller units based on differences in dialect. People who live twenty miles distant do not understand each other. There is no tribal, political, or other social relationship between these linguistic units. Even the villages of one linguistic section do not act as a unit. They have no common chief, and until recently, when it was prohibited by the white Government, there was fighting between the villages of the same linguistic unit. To-day there is jealousy and absence of any united feeling among them. It is merely a geographical area, separated from other areas by its language, but other than that it has no cohesion and does not even have a name. The village, with its distinct round of life, its chief, its important old men, its communal rites, its communally owned ground, its gossip and mass of trivial details which make up life, is the largest functioning unit based on locality. To-day, inter-village life within the same linguistic unit is confined mostly to important ritual occasions, when members of near-by villages congregate.

The village is subdivided into hamlets. Lesu, the village where I lived, has 232 inhabitants, and stretches along the coast for about three miles. It is divided into fifteen hamlets, separated from one another by fences and sometimes also by unused land. Each hamlet contains from two to eight houses. The larger hamlets have their men's house and cemetery, and every hamlet has its own communal cooking-ground and sometimes a cookhouse. The only orientation in the arrangement of houses is that the men's house and cemetery are near the sea. Each hamlet also has its name and a community life of its own, apart from its participation in the village life, and its members are frequently close relatives, but not always so. The women cook together and the men assist each other in their fishing and house-building.

3: Chinnery G, E-5 (1929) 1931 OM10 New Ireland OM10

Scattered along the coast between the villages are the coco-nut plantations owned and worked by Europeans. They also appear in the list above-mentioned in capital letters. 361

During the German régime, efforts to enumerate the natives living between Kavieng and Madina were still being made in 1901-1902, and in that year the Government called a meeting of tribes, who two years before were hostile, and induced them to select chiefs to assist in local administration. Sub-districts were delineated and an enumeration was made, 5,118 people being recorded between Kavieng and Lugagun. This number did not include the forest and mountain people, as it was intended later on to amalgamate these with the coastal groups. In 1906-1907, however, the successful organization of unions between the two stocks appears to have taken place. What is meant by this is not quite clear, but, from what I gathered during the inquiry, most of the mountain people were induced to build temporary villages on the coast, and fusion between the stocks was encouraged in every possible way. Certain villages on the coast now belong to mountain people, who live in them for short intervals, and almost everywhere more or less fusion between the two stocks has taken place. 659 619 [161]

A great civilizing factor in those days was the coastal road, which in 1902-3 was extended to Fisoa, and in 1903-4 had reached Pinigindu. During 1911-12 no effort was spared to make it suitable for motor traffic. After military occupation in 1914 this road was extended to Kimaden, and during the present civil administration it has been carried on as far as Karu. Its existence has had a tremendous influence on the development of the people of the district, by whose labour, of course, it has been built and kept in repair. 491

The people of the area investigated are divided linguistically into three main groups, two coastal languages, one extending from Kavieng to Fatmilak, and one from Fatmilak to Karu, and bush languages which appear in purest form in the Limalaua group of people who live in the bush and on the coast near Fatmilak. According to information received from natives, the Kavieng-Fatmilak language is divided into the following dialectical groups:— 197

Kavieng to Losuk.
Mangai to Livitua.
Laowan to Luburua.
Lakurumau (said to be different from the others).
Munawai to Fatmilak.

The languages from Fatmilak to Karu are grouped as follow:—
Limalaua (a bush language) is said to extend to Yendat and possibly to Lemo, Bimun, Panaras, Patlinger and other villages to the west.

5: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1932 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

which he walked up and down singing and talking. He gave once more the reason for the feast, said they had now "marked" all the pigs, and then made a few more remarks about the size of the animals and the number of men present.

Finally, each man makes a rude coconut-leaf basket in which he carries home the remains of his food. But before they leave, the men carefully clean the cemetery and throw all debris into the sea, near which the cemetery is always placed. Not a scrap of food nor any other refuse, such as a leaf "plate," remains, the cemetery being left in the same neat condition that it was in before the feast. This work done, hands are washed in the sea (the sea as a finger bowl is one of its many uses for the native), and then the men drift away singly or in small groups, each carrying his basket with the remains of the food.

Reciprocity Between Moieties

This ritual feast, held on all occasions of importance to the individual or to society, is also frequently the time when the principle of reciprocity between both moieties and localities is seen in full play.

At the feminine feasts, such as pregnancy, birth, first menstruation, and marriage, where there is a distribution of food, the women of the Eagle moiety bring taro which is given to the women of the Hawk moiety, and the women of the Hawk moiety likewise bring taro which in turn is given to the women of the Eagle moiety. This exchange is never omitted. The Eagle women bring their taro, prepare it for baking, and then place it in the liga themselves. They do not forget just where their bundles have been placed. Removing them from the liga, they give them to the women of the Hawk moiety, who do likewise to the women of the Eagle moiety. The taro is of course all exactly the same and prepared in the same fashion, so that one gets exactly what one has given. But it is the ritual exchange between the moieties that is important. At some feasts uncooked taro is exchanged. At the feast, when the men eat, this act of reciprocity does not take place among them: the food is opened up in the cemetery and the taro is distributed regardless of moiety.

Reciprocity Between Villages

It is the uncooked taro that is most often the object of exchange between the women of different villages at intervillage feasts—usually mortuary and malanggon ones. Sometimes the exchange does not always take place at the one feast. The women of Lesu may go to a feast at Ambwa, three miles away, and receive much taro. At a later time the women of Ambwa will come to a similar feast at Lesu and receive taro as a return gift.